

The National Tribune

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"To care for him who has borne the battle, and for his widow and orphans."—ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

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THE NATIONAL TRIBUNE CO.,
Washington, D. C.

The Avalanche.

It has come. Hundreds of petitions have been received and presented against the Sixty Surgeons, and "the cry is still they come."

The soldiers are aroused as they never have been since the breaking out of the war, and they stand as a unit against the bill. You cannot find one ex-soldier in the land in favor of it. God forbid that it should pass, but, if it does, we will endeavor to rally every soldier in the land into the ranks of an independent party for 1880, with one as a candidate on whose banner will be inscribed, "The soldiers demand justice and will have it." With one million of soldiers backing such a ticket, aided by their friends and those inclined to break off from parties, the old parties will be swept away as by a hurricane. Soldiers, watch and wait.

Here They Come.

What? Why, our subscriptions. Our soldier friends are rolling them in as a great tidal wave. Friends, we thank each and all of you. Come on! We still cry for recruits to join the great TRIBUNE army, now battling to drive a tyrant from his throne and to restore the reign of justice and honesty.

The Great Humorous Paper.—Colored and Illustrated.

This is undoubtedly "Puck," published weekly, in New York. Several elegantly colored, spicy cartoons are in every number. Now, for \$4 per year we will send you "Puck" and the NATIONAL TRIBUNE. The retail price of "Puck" is 10 cents per number.

Sample Copies Free.

Let it be understood that while we are ready to furnish a sample copy free, we do not propose to give the paper away to any one person or persons who regularly "sponge" a copy. We expect all such to subscribe. It is very "small potatoes" to sponge for a paper that only costs 50 cents per year, and we have a black list of those who are guilty of this petty meanness.

Examination of the Pension Office.

The confessed evils of the present system of adjudication of pension cases has at last attracted the attention of Congress, the complaints of the people having come up in letters, petitions, and newspapers in such masses and with such weights that they could not longer be ignored.

The Commissioner's own official statements show a strange, unreasonable, and outrageous delay in settlement of plain cases, and an accumulation of new business which threatens to overtask the office and swamp the whole concern in one mudhole of imbecility.

The grave question for Congress to decide upon is whether the existing system is in the wrong, or whether it is the manner of administration of the system that is to blame. The Commissioner charges the admitted evil upon the system; those who know as much of the Pension Office as he does charge that the defect is in his management.

The present pension system is a complicated piece of machinery, which, if it have a competent engineer, will work smoothly and with good results.

But if the engineer is incompetent, or perversely bent upon the destruction of the machinery, or, which is worse, if he have some new, untried patent device of his own which he wants to substitute, he will hinder the fair working of his machine, he will throw its parts out of gear, he will increase the friction and reduce the working power, so that the result may condemn the old apparatus and render it necessary to try something else. When this result has been reached, and general disgust has been saddled, by his own acts, upon the old plan, then he stands ready with his patent contrivance and announces his new "back-action, semi-judicial tribunal" to bring all this confusion into order.

As the engineer of the old machine, he claims that he knows by experience its defects, and that the same experience points out the remedy.

This he has been doing for three years, and yet the remedy is worse than the disease.

Like the old quack, he has thrown the pension system into "fits," because his specialty is the treatment of "fits."

He has been wonderfully successful in bringing on this stage of disease, but he shows no special talent for getting out of it.

However, public attention is now fixed on his office and its administration, and a special committee of the House has commenced an examination. Immediately that this committee began to look into the workings of the office the old cry is at once raised that the examination has been suggested by and is in the interest of CLAIM AGENTS. It is a cruel insult to the committee, to the gentleman who proposed the resolution, and to the House of Representatives. It is an unnecessary and unmanly falsehood. It is a cowardly attempt to prejudice an examination demanded by popular sentiment and to belittle a great endeavor by associating it with dirty and mean personal motives. The charge can come only from Mr. Bentley or Mr. Bentley's friends. It is disreputable and untrue, from whatever source it may come.

Conscious innocence needs no such vile colorings. Mr. Harmer, of Pennsylvania, offered this resolution from no motive of hostility to the Commissioner, and so stated in his place on the floor.

He simply recognized the fact that a very bad state of things existed, and desired to find out the reason, and, if possible, apply a remedy.

The committee was appointed, and then the cry was raised that this was a Democratic device to make political capital.

Now the cry of "claim agents" is raised for the same purpose.

The House of Representatives has the right to examine any public office or public officer. It is their duty to examine all such as are the subjects of general complaints. No man denies the existence of this general complaint, nor of the growing evils which cause it. Mr. Bentley paints it himself in the most gloomy colors.

Is there any special "Divinity that doth hedge about" the Commissioner and place him beyond the reach of examination?

His office is of great trust and great responsibility, and therefore his failure is the more lamentable;

and, inasmuch as the poor dependents upon his action have no other advocate, it is the special duty of the House of Representatives to look up their case and sustain their rights.

Three hundred thousand citizens of the United States ask their intervention, and one official, panoplied in pride of office, bars the door in their faces.

No claim agent, or representative of such, has ever crossed the doors of that committee, or ever will, unless invited. They leave this question where it is—in the hands of the Representatives of the people—and stand, like all other citizens, ready to answer any summons, ready to give any information, but not taking any part in this examination.

The committee will do their duty, as they think best, and the shallow pretenses of prejudices, which are published by interested parties in tributary newspapers, will only sharpen the edge of their purpose to unveil the secrets of the Pension Office.

Bentley's Greased Pole.

The impression probably produced upon one by reading this heading would be that it was a patented article, the offspring of the fertile brain of the Commissioner of Pensions, but candor compels us to state that no patent exists covering the invention, though its originator was doubtless John A. Bentley—none of his predecessors in office having made use of the article. Now, it is well known that grease is a facilitating agent for many purposes. Car axles are greased in order that wheels may revolve smoothly, and without the use of oil upon machinery it would soon be destroyed and rendered useless. But the Bentley grease is calculated to produce entirely opposite results. It retards progress and prevents action. You are astonished. We will explain. If you have ever been to a watering place on the sea shore you have witnessed the sports connected with the greased pole. It is generally fifty or sixty feet high, and for twenty from its top downward it is thoroughly greased. A purse, probably with \$10 in it, is attached to the top of the pole, and if any climber succeeds in reaching that point the prize is his. He starts from the foot of the pole in high glee, and his progress to the greased region is rapid. His spirits are exultant—he will soon win the coveted prize. He reaches up and slides back, reaches up and slides back, reaches up and slides back, continually struggling to the extent of his strength, till at last, too worried and exhausted for any further effort, he gives up the struggle, and slides or falls to the ground. Now, a pole of this kind has, for a long time, been erected in the Pension Office. J. A. B. has put up a pension on the top of it, and has applied his grease for about half the distance down it. You can mount up swiftly to the greased locality, but there your troubles and Bentley's fun begin. To reach the top of the pole is indeed a herculean task. We are reminded of this subject by reading a letter from a soldier, who says: "The way Bentley manages the Pension Office puts me in mind of a piece I saw in the paper recently of a rich man who told a poor man that he would give him a chance to make some money if he would come next week. The poor man arrived on the day appointed, and the rich man said if he would climb that pole (pointing at one the rich man has just erected) he could have the purse of \$1,000 on the top of it. But the pole was well greased after he got up a little distance, and he never could advance higher than the greased part of it." Now, we advocate the speedy removal of this greased Pension Office pole, as well as the man who erected it."

Another Premium.

For \$1 will send you THE NATIONAL TRIBUNE for one year and the American Illustrated Pronouncing Dictionary, just published, beautifully bound, containing 25,000 words, with Greek and Latin phrases, proverbs and quotations, abbreviations used in the arts, sciences, and literature, and other information of value. One of those beautiful and valuable books and a copy of our paper for one year will be sent to any one who will send \$10 for the ten papers and dictionaries; but, as aforesaid, \$1 forwarded us will secure to any individual the book and paper.